

GENERAL PLAN 1990

CITY OF MERCED, CALIFORNIA

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

The Citizens' Committee of 100 formulated goals and objectives as the first step in preparing the General Plan. Concurrently, the Consultants conducted research into the economic, social and physical character of Merced. Both these goals and the research findings were then translated into a Sketch Plan. Next, Special Studies were made of circulation, industrial development, schools and recreation, and the downtown and civic center. Downtown received the most intense study because of the scope of its problems and its importance to the structure of the City. Finally, the General Plan was prepared.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Major goals formulated by the Committee of 100 and adopted by the City are:

- Set reasonable limits to urban expansion to provide urban services efficiently and to protect agriculture.
- Maintain downtown Merced as a dominant commercial center.
- Provide for other commercial expansion only as the need is proved.
- Expand community facilities, including City Hall, preferably downtown.
- Encourage industry to locate in Merced by providing adequate sites.
- Expand recreation facilities including neighborhood parks and strip parks particularly along waterways.
- Provide an efficient system of circulation for present and future needs.
- Provide coordination between capital improvements and planning programs.

POPULATION AND GROWTH

The population of the City is about 24,000 and of the Planning Area, about 35,500. By 1990, the Planning Area is expected to have about 60,000 people. Approximately 55,000 will live in the urban area and 5,000 will live in the rural area.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN

Urban-Rural Boundary It is essential to define clearly and distinguish between urban areas and rural areas for three fundamental reasons:

- To protect agriculture from encroachment by unrelated uses.
- To provide municipal service efficiently to a compact, urban population.
- To give unity and coherence to Merced through a clear urban-rural boundary.

Urban Density Three urban residential densities are shown on the Plan and defined in the legend. Within each density, there should be a variety of housing types and lot sizes. Rural non-farm housing should be restricted and regulated.

Commercial Uses Downtown Merced is proposed to be made more attractive and concentrated to improve pedestrian shopping convenience and vehicular circulation. This must be done if the Downtown Area is to retain its role in competition with the regional center at Santa Fe Drive and R Street. A new Civic Center is recommended downtown as an additional support to the area. Offices are proposed along M Street between the Downtown Area and Bear Creek.

The established area shown as general commercial exceeds the foreseeable need for such uses. It will be many years before the problems of appropriate uses and development within this area can be solved. Good development controls and performance standards for all permitted uses are recommended.

Visitor commercial areas are proposed at freeway access locations. The proposed neighborhood and community shopping centers in the Plan are adequate for the planning period. Discouragement of disruptive strip commercial uses will provide protection for these centers, and stabilize the land use along major streets.

Industrial Uses The 775 acres of industrial land shown on the Plan represent about 3 times the amount which can be occupied by 1990. Industry is proposed to be concentrated to encourage a strong industrial base in Merced and to protect other locations from industrial encroachment. The airport industrial park is reserved for light industries. The excessive industrial zoning in unincorporated areas adjacent to Merced must be reduced.

Circulation The proposed circulation system consists of freeways, major, and collector streets based on the land use projections for 1990. It must be developed as a complete system. The peripheral roads will allow people to reach destinations with minimal use of internal streets and are needed so that thoroughfares such as G Street will not become overloaded.

Schools The Merced Elementary School District plans a gradual change to elementary schools, kindergarten through 4th grade, and middle schools, 5th through 8th grade. In the General Plan several new elementary schools are proposed to serve areas of future urbanization. In South Merced, Galen Clark School is shown relocated on a more appropriate site. One more elementary school may be needed in South Merced as well. Middle schools are proposed at existing Tenaya and Hoover Schools and at the Rivera School (Tioga). Two additional middle schools may be needed in the urban area: one to serve the neighborhoods of West Merced, Old Merced and West Bear Creek, and a second to serve the south and east parts of the area.

The Merced High School North Campus, and the new high school planned for an adjacent site will provide for high school needs during the planning period. Merced College will serve the Planning Area adequately if an additional campus is developed elsewhere in the County.

Parks and Recreation The Plan provides for sufficient parks and open spaces to fulfill active recreation needs and the open space needs within the Planning Area. A strip park concept as advocated by the Committee of 100 is shown in the Plan. All creek banks are proposed as parks. Where creeks do not exist, special street treatment, including closing of streets for greenways, is proposed. Neighborhood parks are shown in all neighborhoods, adjacent to elementary schools where possible. A major City park and a golf course are proposed along and near Fahrens Creek.

Civic Center Two possible locations for the City administrative offices are shown. The recommended location is close to the Downtown Area, in the vicinity of M and 18th Streets. The alternate location, Le Conte School site, is also under consideration by the City.

Airport The current expansion program for the airport facilities will be adequate for foreseeable needs.

CARRYING OUT THE PLAN

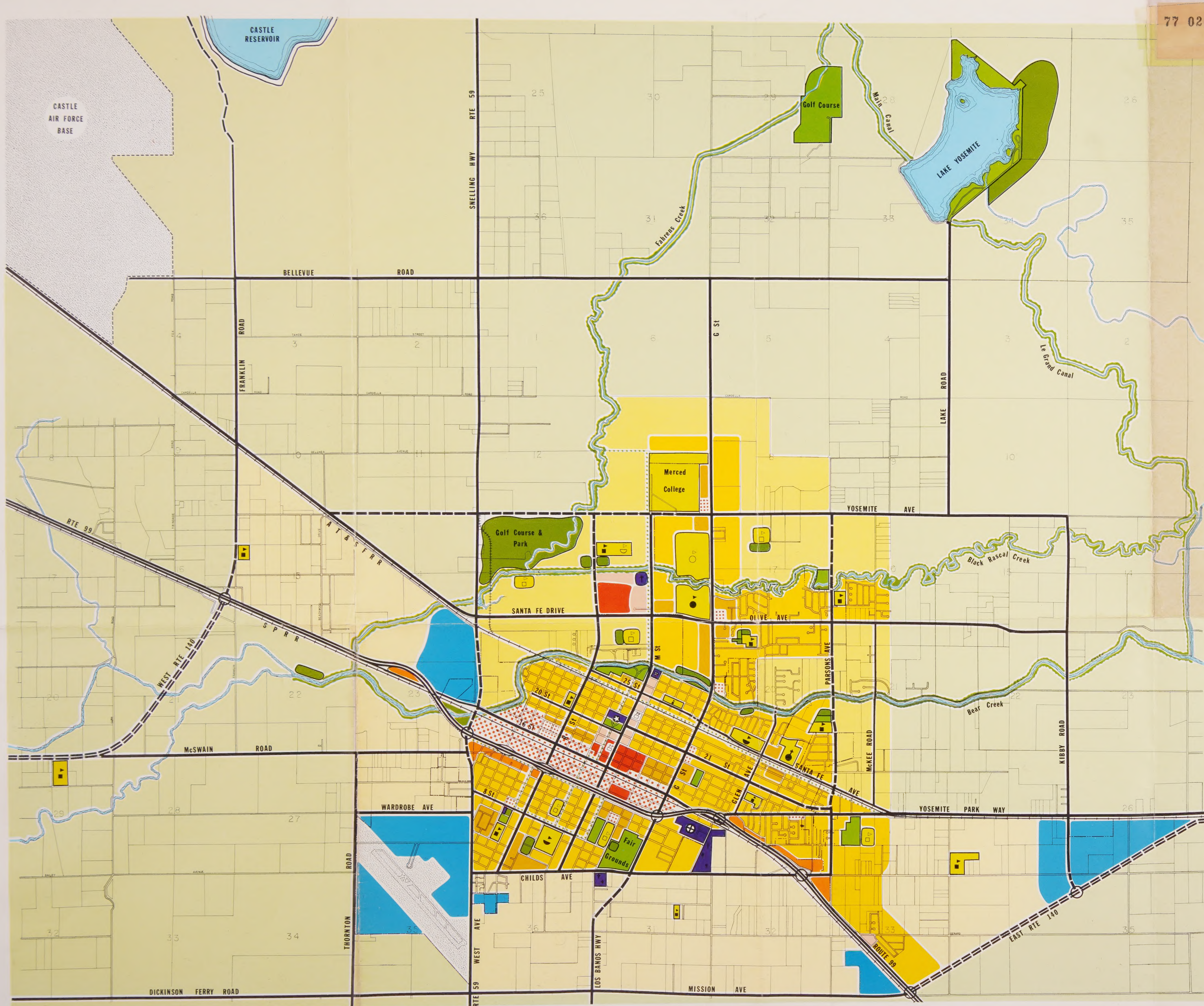
Achievement of the goals of the General Plan will depend upon continuing and co-operative action by officials, citizens and private developers in Merced. The following steps are recommended:

- Annual review of the Plan by the Planning Commission and City Council.
- Periodic review of Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances.
- Immediate review and strengthening of Sign Control Ordinance.
- Adoption of a long-range Capital Improvement Program.
- A detailed Downtown Development Plan and Financial Feasibility Program.
- A Merced Boundary Study to determine logical service areas and to guide an annexation program.
- Adoption of a Mandatory Referral procedure to enable the Planning Commission to coordinate all public programs.

THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCED IN PART THROUGH AN URBAN PLANNING GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 701 OF THE HOUSING ACT OF 1954 AS AMENDED.

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CITY & REGIONAL PLANNING
1045 SANSOME STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94111

Merced City Council
City Planning
Merced



Residential

	DWELLING UNITS PER GROSS ACRE
Rural Non Farm	less than 0.5
Very low Density	0.5 - 2.3
Low Density	2.4 - 4.5
Medium - high Density	4.6 - 30.0

Commercial

Regional Center
Neighborhood or Community Center
General
Visitor
Offices

Parks & Schools

EXISTING	PROPOSED
	Neighborhood or Community Park
	Strip Park
	Special Street Treatment
	Elementary School
	Middle School
	High School

Circulation

EXISTING	PROPOSED
	Freeway
	Interchange (new or modified)
	Major arterial
	Collector
	Railroad

Other Facilities

EXISTING	PROPOSED
	Civic Center
	County Center
	Hospital
	Religious
	Cemetery

Scale: 0 1000' 2000'

ADOPTED:

Planning Commission:

Chairman:

Director:

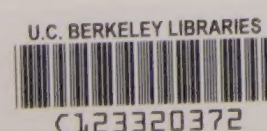
City Council:

Mayor:

Acting City Clerk:

date: July 10, 1968

date: Aug. 19, 1968



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